Fishing techniques and associated tools.— 227 Fishing with native Tarascan nets predominates in Lakes Pátzcuaro and Zirahuén. Both the net and the hook were employed in pre-Conquest times,[121] but at present the latter is of secondary importance. The large *chinchorros* (uaɪúka) and the smaller čerémekuas are the only nets used today. The former is a seine, employed for catching *pescado blanco* and *trucha* in midlake, while the latter, a gill net with a fine mesh, is placed along shore to trap the small č'arári and k'uerépu[122] (pl. 8). Prior to the introduction of the *trucha* the picturesque *mariposa* or butterfly nets (k'oruеča) were commonly employed for catching t'íru. Owing to the near extinction of this fish, these nets are no longer seen, except in Janitzio, where they are displayed to tourists. The hand net (*cuchara*, uirípu, ćiúru) has likewise practically disappeared. All nets used by the Pátzcuaro fisherman are home-woven.

Other fishing tools include the spear (*arpón*, atárakua), now used to kill *trucha* in shallow water, and the hook (*anzuelo*, jupíkata-tárakua).[123] Shore traps are occasionally used by a few fishers of Uricho and Puácuaro. Fish poisons are not employed. To improve habitat conditions of open-water fish, such as *pescado blanco*, portions of the lake bottom are often cleared of aquatic grasses (*zacate*, pućúrini) with the uarómatárakua, a pole 3 m. long with a sickle attached to the end.

An indispensible fishing tool and means of water 501 transport is the Tarascan canoe, a flat-bottom dugout hewn from a pine or fir log. Owing to the

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226 [121] According to the Relación de Michoacán, Tarascan officials oversaw the net fishermen and those who fished with hooks (p. 16). Moreover, ". . . *de noche pescan con red y de día con anzuelo*" (p. 149).

[122] The *chinchorro* often measures 100 to 150 m. long and 8 m. wide. In the center is a pocket (*bolsa*) of fine mesh. Four people are necessary to handle the net in midlake, and it is usually operated from one boat. The net is manipulated by ropes (angítatárakuеča), 50 to 60 m. long attached to its two ends. Once the net is cast, it is formed in a semicircle and slowly pulled forward and upward, while the catch settles into the *bolsa*. The čerémekua is usually 6 to 8 m. long and 40 cm. wide. This net is used somewhat like a trap. It is fastened to poles in shallow water near the shore and left for 2 or 3 hours. When lifted, the net usually contains several small littoral fish, their heads caught in the fine mesh. This type of čerémekua can be operated by one person. A longer čerémekua (often 100 m. in length) with a coarser mesh is sometimes used to catch *pescado blanco* in deep water offshore. Like the smaller variety, it is operated by one person, who attaches the top of the net to log floats and one end to his canoe. The net and boat are permitted to drift in midlake usually through the night, while the attendant gathers in the trapped fish from time to time.

[123] The atárakua is composed of a stalk of *carrizo* 4 m. long, to the end of which is attached a long barbed-iron point (60 cm. long). The spear is buried either above or beneath the water. Regarding the use of the *anzuelo*, the cord supporting the hook is usually attached to a piece of *carrizo* or *otate*, 1 m. long, a series of which is permitted to float on the water. A strike is indicated by the tilting of the stick, which is hurriedly picked up by the boatman.

501 drying up of lakes in the northern and western sections of Tarasca, the distribution of the dugout has decreased in area during the last 100 years. At the present time the Tarascan boat is used on Lakes Pátzcuaro, Zirahuén, Cuitzeo, and Chapala; two old dugouts on the small pond at Tarejero represent the remnants of the once extensive canoe traffic in the Zacapu lagoon.[124] Most of the Lake [438] Pátzcuaro boats are made in the Sierra settlements of Cumachuén, Capacuaro, and in the highlands to the south, mainly around the *rancho* of Santa Juana. The boats are dragged to the lake shore, where they sell for 100 to more than 600 pesos each. They are said to last for 3 to 5 years before becoming waterlogged. Two sizes of boats are seen on Lake Pátzcuaro—the small ičáruta for two to four persons, used for shore fishing, and the larger tepári, which carries from four to eight individuals and is employed in midlake fishing and for transport.[125] The smaller boat is paddled with the *pala* or šótakua, which has a round blade of pine (25 × 28 cm.) attached to a handle of oak or *tejocote* varying in length from 30 cm. (for children) to over 2 m. The larger canoes are both paddled and rowed. Sierra folk from Cumachuén and Capacuaro manufacture oars and paddles, which they market in Erongarícuaro and Pátzcuaro.

226 **Fishing methods.**—In most parts of the lake, fishing is done in the early morning hours between 5 and 10 o'clock. Fishing is seasonal, most activity occurring during the dry season (November to May). *Chinchorreros* usually operate in groups of four; often blood relations, the group divides the catch equally. An owner of a net and boat often hires *peones* to help with the *chinchorro*, paying wages or dividing the catch. The wife and children occasionally help set the čerémekua along the shore, and often women aid with the *chinchorro*. Midlake fishing is open to all inhabitants of the Lake area, who pay a federal license of 1.50 pesos annually. By custom, however, the people of a particular settlement have exclusive fishing rights along the shore of their lands; those from other pueblos may not fish the shores of

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[124] As late as 1872 heavy canoe traffic is described between Tarejero and Zacapu (Pérez Hernández, 1872, p. 119). Late in the 16th century small reed *balsas* were used on Lake Chapala (Ponce Relacion, vol. 2, pp. 18-20).

[125] Measurements of the dugouts: The ičáruta has a length of 2.5 m. to 6.5 m., width of 60 cm., and depth of 40 cm.; the tepári ranges from 6.5 to 11 m. long, 1 m. wide, and 50 cm. deep.

[End-plate 8]

[313] [27] [501] [33] [314]

PLATE 8.—Fishing and forest exploitation. *a*, Chinchorro nets drying on La Pacanda Island, Lake Pátzcuaro. *b*, The small Janitzio dugout, Lake Zirahuén. Note paddles attached to rear of canoe *c*, Typical method of gathering resin (near Uruapan). The resin flows into the clay vessel attached to the tree. *d*, The small Jérnekua, or gill net, drying (Janitzio). *e*, Sawing planks in mixed pine-fir forest, southern slope of Cerro de Patamban, near Paracho. *f*, Burning charcoal near Capacuaro. *g*, Cut-over land between Sevina and Turbuaro, now in maize fields and pasture.

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PLATE 14.—Markets and transport. *a*, The Sunday firewood and fish market, Erongaricuaro. The weed vendor at left has already bartered a pile of pinacates for a few fish in the basket. *b*, Pottery section of the Sunday market at Uruapan. *c*, The bread section of the Erongaricuaro market on the plaza. *d*, A train of burros bringing yáuu palm leaves from the sierra adjacent to Arlo de Rosales. *e*, Boats from Janitzio landing on the mud flats at Erongaricuaro for the Sunday market. *f*, Hauling disassembled chairs and tables from Cocupo to the Uruapan market.

[End-plate 14]